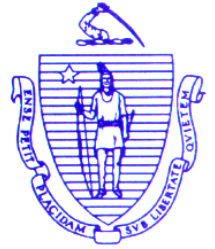




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**October 18, 2002**  
**Press Release**

**MASSACHUSETTS MULTISPECIES ECONOMIC FISHERY  
ASSISTANCE TO PROVIDE \$5.5-MILLION TO INDUSTRY.**

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In August 2002, the President and Congress signed an Act that allocates funds to provide \$12-million in economic assistance to fishing communities of New England affected by federal closures and fishing restrictions in the northeast groundfish fishery. Massachusetts will receive a total of \$5,500,000 to assist its fishermen and fishing communities.

Governor Jane Swift has convened a Fishery Assistance Advisory Council tasked with identifying the immediate critical needs of the industry and the potential long-term threats to the Commonwealth's fishing economy. The Assistance Council is composed of representatives from the Department of Economic Development, Massachusetts Office of Business Development, Seaport Advisory Council and Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The state agency designated by the Assistance Council to administer the grant is the Division of Marine Fisheries (*MarineFisheries*).

*MarineFisheries* plans to distribute the funds based primarily on direct compensation for lost days at sea (DAS) and in support of the fishing infrastructure. A total of \$2.25-million would go towards a "Lost Income Subsidies" (LIS) program and \$2.5-million towards a "Fishing Infrastructure Subsidies" (FIS) program. Under the LIS program grants would be given to vessel owners, captains and crew for lost income because of reduced DAS. Grants to assist vessel owners in paying for vessel safety upgrades and maintenance, for fishing gear replacement, and for some of the basic costs of vessel operations would be provided under the FIS program. Remaining funds would be set aside for an appeals process as well as for a second phase program, should the need arise and money still be available.

Elected state officials from New Bedford and Gloucester, and industry representatives of the Massachusetts Fishery Recovery Commission, the Trawler Survival Fund, the Massachusetts Fishermen's Partnership, Gloucester Fishermen's Wives Association and the Cape Cod Commercial Hook Fisherman's Association have all provided valuable input to the Assistance Council. *MarineFisheries* is seeking further comments from the fishing industry and communities on its proposed groundfish economic assistance programs. Please watch the *MarineFisheries* website, [www.mass.gov/marinefisheries](http://www.mass.gov/marinefisheries), and listserv for announcements of upcoming meetings in Gloucester, New Bedford and Marshfield.

For further information please contact Melanie Griffin at 617.626.1528.